ADVANCED DRESSING STATIONS AND DRESSING STATIONS IN THEIR RELATION TO THE PERSONNEL AND IMPEDIMENTA OF A FIELD AMBULANCE, TERRITORIAL FORCE.

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RAPIDITY of action being an essential factor in the formation and removal of advanced dressing stations and dressing stations, it is imperative that the officers of field ambulances should possess a preconceived plan for laying out these posts, and also a prearranged and systematic organization of the personnel at their disposal.

It is equally necessary that all ranks be intimately acquainted with the personnel, transport and equipment required, and in the case of the latter, not alone with the uses of the various articles, but also with their position in the transport vehicles and their proper location in the dressing stations.

The easiest and at the same time the most satisfactory method of obtaining a thorough working knowledge of the equipment is first of all to recognize the functions and uses of the various "entities" into which a field ambulance can be divided. As, however, a field ambulance consists of three separate and distinct self-contained sections, each section capable of independent action, for our present purpose (i.e., the study of the relationship borne by the personnel and equipment to advanced dressing stations and dressing stations) it is only necessary to consider the impedimenta of any one section. As the personnel of "A" section is somewhat different to that of either "B" or "C" section, I will deal with "B" section. It is also assumed that suitable buildings for the advanced dressing stations and dressing stations are not available, for if such were the case a large proportion of the equipment would not be required and to unpack it would be a tactical error.

In considering personnel, transport and equipment, I propose in the case of the personnel to divide it, not as shown in War Establishments, but into separate departments, e.g., stewards, cooks, clerks, &c. I shall also remove certain men from the

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1 This paper is based on a series of demonstrations given to the officers and men of the R.A.M.C. (T.F.) on the equipment of a Field Ambulance T.F. Every endeavour was made in the demonstrations to impress on each man the necessity of learning the articles of equipment essential for his own particular duty, also its position on the field and the cart in which it is packed.
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transport section to other sections, e.g., batmen will be shown accompanying their own officers.

I shall adopt the same method with the equipment, allocating each article to a certain department. By so doing each man will soon learn the equipment necessary for his own duties, its position in the transport and its proper situation on the field. If added to this knowledge a preconceived plan for laying out advanced dressing stations and dressing stations be adopted, along with a systematic organization of the personnel available, that celerity of action so essential for the erection and demolition of these tactical posts becomes only a matter of practice and can easily be obtained.

Without these plans and in the absence of such knowledge disorder can only result.

What therefore are the "entities" into which any section of a Field Ambulance can be divided? Any section can furnish a bearer sub-division accompanied by an advanced dressing station party; or the bearer sub-division can move off unaccompanied, the remainder of the section forming a dressing station, or part of one (the advanced dressing station in the latter case being formed by another section). We will therefore consider:

(A) The Bearer Sub-division together with the Advanced Dressing Station Party.

(B) The Dressing Station alone.

(A) BEARER SUB-DIVISION WITH ADVANCED DRESSING STATION PARTY.¹

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSONNEL.*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BEARERS.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officer ... ... ... ... 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bearers, N.C.O. ... 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bugler ... 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 S. Squads = 36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(x) Signaller ... ... ... 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One of Supernumeraries of tent sub-division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ADVANCED DRESSING STATION.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officers ... ... ... ... ... 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stewards' Department, viz:—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 N.C.O. = Steward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 N.C.O. = Pack store-keeper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Private = Washerman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Privates = Supernumeraries (1 Signaller, 1 Carpenter)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing Department, viz.:—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 N.C.O. = Nursing Serjeant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 N.C.O. = Dispenser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Privates = Orderlies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total ... ... 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Spare drivers and spare horses are not considered.

(x) Removed from tent sub-division, as he would accompany the bearers.

1 Advanced Dressing Station Party = a tent sub-division with medical store cart and water-cart (R.A.M.C. Training, p. 109).
Advanced Dressing Stations and Dressing Stations

Bearers.

NOTE.

1. The number of bearers does not include the Wagon Orderlies, Drivers, and Batman, as they are not considered in the bearers.

2. The bearers are divided into two sections: Medical and Surgical, and Ordnance.

3. The bearers are also divided into two categories: N.C.O. and Private.

4. The bearers are responsible for transporting the equipment to the advanced dressing station.

Advanced Dressing Station.

Cook's Department.

1 N.C.O. = Corporal cook
1 Private = Cook
Total = 2

Clerk's Department.

1 N.C.O. = Clerks
1 Private = 2
Total = 2

Transport.

Wagon Orderlies = 3
Drivers = 3
Batman = 1
Total = 7

Ambulance wagons = 3

Medical store cart = 1
Water cart = 1

Animals.

Riding horses = 1
Draught horses = 6
Total = 7

(1) Medical and Surgical.

- 6 Haversacks
- 1 Medical companion
- 7 Water bottles

(2) Ordnance.

- 6 Stretchers
- 2 Signalling flags
(For signaller detached with bearers)
- Directing flags

(3) Advanced Dressing Station.

- Supplies - Medical comfort pannier
- Ordnance - Entrenching pannier, pannier (H), lamps, ground sheets and blankets

Nursing Department.

(1) Medical and Surgical Equipment.

- 1 pr. field surgical panniers
- 1 reserve dressing box

(2) Ordnance = 1 filter

Cooks' Department.

- Ordnance equipment - digging tools, kettles

Clerks' Department.

- Ordnance - distinguishing flag-pole and pegs

- Flags (packed in H pannier)

Transport Department.

(1) Supplies - compressed forage

(2) Ordnance - buckets, picketing gear

Equipment.

(See F. S. Manual Medical). Packed in forage cart. In the following table equipment is divided into sections as required by the bearers, and the various detachments of the advanced dressing station:

Bearers.

(1) Medical and Surgical.

- 6 Haversacks
- 1 Medical companion
- 7 Water bottles

(2) Ordnance.

- 6 Stretchers
- 2 Signalling flags
(For signaller detached with bearers)
- Directing flags

Advanced Dressing Station.

(1) Stewards' Department.

- Supplies - Medical comfort pannier
- Ordnance - Entrenching pannier, pannier (H), lamps, ground sheets and blankets

(2) Nursing Department.

- Medical and Surgical Equipment - 1 pr. field surgical panniers
- 1 field fracture box
- 1 reserve dressing box

(2) Ordnance = 1 filter

Cooks' Department.

- Ordnance equipment - digging tools, kettles

Clerks' Department.

- Ordnance - distinguishing flag-pole and pegs

- Flags (packed in H pannier)

Transport Department.

(1) Supplies - compressed forage

(2) Ordnance - buckets, picketing gear
Note on Packing of Medical Store Cart.

Being a two-wheeled vehicle, the balance of the cart when packed must be borne in mind. It is, however, imperative that the stretchers, surgical haversacks, medical companion and water bottles, and two signalling flags and directing flags be packed in such a way as to be easily got at, as they will be required first. The stretchers can be placed along the projecting sides of the cart and the haversacks,
Advanced Dressing Stations and Dressing Stations &c., in rear of cart. The distinguishing flagpole, as also Pannier H, which contains the flags, must be easy of access. The remaining contents can be unloaded in a few minutes, but the medical and surgical boxes must be so placed as to be easily removed.

Plan of advanced dressing station and detail for forming the same, as actually practised during the last annual training at my suggestion. (Fig. 1.)

The section having arrived at its destination, the bearer party is disengaged and sent off to its collecting area. Before doing so the officer in charge of the bearers orders the stretchers and other bearer equipment to be removed from the forage cart. He must also be accompanied by his signaller and batman. The advanced dressing station is then formed as follows:

The officers dismount and hand over their chargers to their batmen; areas for seriously wounded and slightly wounded, sites for forage cart, latrines and kitchens (in neighbourhood of which the water cart is placed) are selected. (See fig. 1.)

The transport department unharness, water, feed and picket the horses. Simultaneously the forage cart is unpacked under the supervision of the steward, care being taken to separate the medical and surgical equipment from the ordnance. As the clerks have no work to perform till the arrival of the wounded they are made responsible for the erection of the Geneva Cross flag. The cooks dig the kitchen, fill kettles and prepare medical comforts. The supernumeraries dig the latrines.

The remainder (with the exception of the nursing serjeant and dispenser, who with the assistance of the steward improvise a temporary dispensary out of the empty forage cart) erect temporary shelters with ground sheets and blankets in the area within the advanced dressing station allocated by the officer commanding for the reception of lying-down cases. The various medical and surgical boxes are opened, sterilization begun, and dressings and lotions prepared by the dispenser. On arrival of the sick and wounded one or more men are placed at the entrance of the advanced dressing station to point out the areas allotted for walking cases, and the shelters for more seriously injured. They are seen by the officers, and treatment prescribed if necessary, after which they are fed. The walking cases collected into groups are marched off in charge of the senior wounded man to the divisional collecting station, and the lying-down cases disposed of as circumstances determine.
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B. DRESSING STATION.
(Formed by one tent subdivision with its transport.)

PERSONNEL.*

Officers ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 2

Steward's Department: 1 N.C.O. = Steward
1 ... = Pack storekeeper
1 Private = Washerman
3 Supernumeraries {2 Signallers
1 Carpenter

Total ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 6

Nursing Department: 1 N.C.O. = Nursing Serjeant
1 ... = Dispenser
7 Privates = Nursing Orderlies

Total ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 9

Cooks' Department: 1 N.C.O. } Cooks
1 Private }
1 Private
Total ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 2

Clerks' Department: 1 N.C.O. } Clerks
1 Private }
1 Private
Total ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 2

Transport Department: 1 N.C.O. = Transport Serjeant
4 Privates = Drivers
2 ... = Batmen

Total ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 7

Vehicles.

2 G.S. wagons = { 1 Medical store wagon
1 Medical store cart
1 Water cart

Animals.

Riding horses ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 3
Draught horses ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 7

(Water cart has 2 horses in peace, Peace Establishments T.F.)

* Spare drivers and spare horses are not considered.

Equipment.

This is packed in the Medical Store Cart and G.S. Wagons (see F. S. Manual Med.). It is separated as required by the various departments forming the dressing station.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medical Store</th>
<th>Medical Store</th>
<th>Baggage Wagon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CART Supplies</td>
<td>WAGON Supplies</td>
<td>Supplies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical comfort pannier</td>
<td>Medical comfort pannier</td>
<td>Rations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordnance</td>
<td>Ordnance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pannier (E)</td>
<td>Stretcher</td>
<td>Grocery pannier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ground sheets and blankets</td>
<td>Operating tent</td>
<td>Clothing chest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Panniers (E) (F)</td>
<td>Ground sheets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cash box</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Advanced Dressing Stations and Dressing Stations

**Medical and Surgical Equipment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nursing Department</th>
<th>F. Surgical panniers</th>
<th>Field fracture box</th>
<th>Reserve dressing box</th>
<th>Medical and Surgical Equipment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(9)</td>
<td>F. Medical panniers</td>
<td>Surgical haversack</td>
<td>Medical companion dressing box</td>
<td>Ordnance Equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Filter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Operating table</td>
<td>mattress</td>
<td>Panniers (C) (D) (G)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>lamp</td>
<td>Palliases</td>
<td>Operating table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dressing box</td>
<td>Portable stove kettles</td>
<td>Panniers (A) (B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Stools, filter</td>
<td>Stationary box</td>
<td>Camp table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Frying pans</td>
<td>Camp chairs</td>
<td>Camp table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kettles</td>
<td>Compressed forage</td>
<td>Compressed forage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Butcher's case</td>
<td>Picketing gear</td>
<td>Picketing gear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Spring balance</td>
<td>Repair pannier</td>
<td>Repair pannier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Frying pans</td>
<td>Veterinary wallet</td>
<td>Veterinary wallet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Horse buckets</td>
<td>Horse buckets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Officers' baggage</td>
<td>Officers' baggage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Compressed forage</td>
<td>Compressed forage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the medical store wagon and baggage and supply wagons are four-wheeled vehicles, the question of balance does not require consideration. In the case of the former the operating tent must be placed in the wagon last, as it will be the first article required. It is immaterial how the other articles are placed in the wagon, as by the time the operating tent is pitched (half an hour) all the articles will be neatly separated on the ground and available for the various departments of the dressing station. With regard to the baggage and supply wagon, the bell tents must be placed in the rear of the vehicle with the picketing gear close to them. The officer's baggage and the ground sheets for the personnel, along with the clothing chest and repair pannier, are the least essential articles, and should be placed in the fore part of the wagon.

**Plan of Dressing Station.** (Showing position of panniers.)

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1 In order to impress the principal contents of each ordnance pannier on the men, they were given distinctive names, viz.:—

- "A" pannier = dining pannier
- "B" pannier = cook's pannier
- "C" pannier = operating tent
- "D" pannier = oil pannier
- "E" pannier = general utility pannier
- "F" pannier = excretal pannier
- "G" pannier = forage cart pannier
- "H" pannier = entrenching pannier
Drill for Pitching a Dressing Station.

General Remarks.—The first essentials are the pitching of the operating tent, the four bell tents, and the erection of the distinguishing flag. Excluding transport personnel and officers, the numbers available are nineteen. For the operating tent seven men (1 N.C.O. and six men) are necessary, for the bell tents eight men, and two are required for the flag. All ranks must therefore perform manual labour if a rapid result be desired.

Method.—The officers dismount, hand over their chargers to their batmen, select a position for the G.S. wagons (future storeroom); medical store cart (future reception office); sites for kitchen latrines and mortuary; areas for slightly wounded and seriously wounded; they also point out the position for bell tents and operating tent. Then the officer in charge organizes his personnel as follows:

As before, the clerks erect the distinguishing flag and then unpack the forage cart—their future office. On the formation of their office they collect the camp table, camp chairs and stationery

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1 Actually carried out at annual training, 1911, by No. I. and No. II. Field Ambulance, West Lancashire, Division T.F., under my supervision.
box, by this time unpacked, and equip the office with these articles, thus being ready to act as a receiving station.

The steward and N.C.O. cook superintend the unpacking of the G.S. wagons. The remaining personnel are divided into (a) bell tent party; (b) operating tent party.

(a) The bell tent party, consisting of the nursing serjeant and seven nursing orderlies (eight in all), remove the bell tents from the baggage and supply wagon and pitch them. This will take about seven minutes.

Two of the orderlies next equip these tents with ground sheets, panniasses, blankets, and the excretal receptacles found in pannier "G." (the excretal pannier) which they place in the vicinity of the tents. The remainder carry the medical and surgical boxes from the medical store cart and wagon, also the operating table, mattress, lamp, and panniers (C) and (D) to the neighbourhood of the operating tent, still in course of erection. Having done this they, under supervision of the nursing serjeant, erect, in the allotted areas for serious cases, temporary shelters made out of the ground sheets and the blankets taken from the medical store cart by the clerks.

(b) The Operating Tent Party: The dispenser and six men (viz., one cook and five men from the stewards' department) remove the tent from the medical store wagon, and pitch it (twenty-five minutes will be required). On completion of this work the six men return to their respective duties, e.g., the pack storekeeper, the washerman, and the three supernumeraries report to the steward and under his direction improvise a store-room with the tarpaulins of the wagons, to act as a packstore and a stewards' store (see diagram). The panniers (E) and (F), the oil and the general utility panniers, are placed to act as a table for the pack storekeeper who obtains his Army forms from the stationery box. In the stewards' store are the supplies and medical comfort panniers.

The cook (private) reports to the N.C.O. cook who has collected the kettles, portable store, firewood and digging implements and also panniers (A) and (B) and begun the kitchen. A soakage pit is dug, water boiled, and rations prepared.

To Equip the Operating Tent.—The two nursing orderlies, who by this time have equipped the bell tents, with the assistance of the dispenser serjeant now equip the operating tent with the various articles placed in its vicinity by the bell tent party. The operating table is first placed in position to enable a man to reach the ridge pole and hang up the operating lamp; the operating table having no legs is placed on panniers (C) and (D) (see diagram), such articles as hair clippers, tow, hand towels and operating aprons
being first removed. Next the lamp is placed in position by two men. The various surgical and medical boxes are next brought into the tent, opened by the dispenser, dressings and lotions prepared and the sterilizer set alight. The box for the operating lamp is arranged as an anaesthetist’s table. The mattress is placed on the operating table, covered with towels, the aprons and towels are prepared. Everything is now ready for the reception of the wounded.

Satisfactory and rapid results can only be achieved by instituting some such systematic scheme as herein described. The method delineated is not claimed to be ideal or incapable of improvement. It is however a practical one ensuring an absence of confusion, a simultaneous performance by each man of his own particular duty, and rapidity of action, as the appended somewhat interesting results, obtained at last year’s training, I think fairly prove.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimum times taken to-</th>
<th>Erect</th>
<th>Remove</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Advanced dressing station</td>
<td>10 mins.</td>
<td>5½ mins.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) A dressing station</td>
<td>30 mins.</td>
<td>14½ mins.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The removal times were taken from the moment the wounded were placed in the ambulance wagons. With regard to the time taken to erect the dressing stations, it is only right to state that the blankets and ground sheets for shelters were prepared ready for setting up beforehand, that the palliasses were not filled with straw, and in the case of the advanced dressing stations, the unit achieving the ten minutes result did not dig a kitchen, as it—the unit—carried a movable iron grate filled with fuel somewhat after the pattern of the incinerator depicted in R.A.M.C. Training, Part II, page 82.

In every instance the sterilizer was set alight, actual sterilization carried out, dressings and lotions prepared, and in the dressing stations the acetylene lamp was placed in position and the gas generated. The horses were picketed, watered and fed.

Some points to remember.

(a) Officers must be accompanied by their batmen and see that the chargers have the necessary picketing gear.

(b) The O.C. bearers must remove the proper equipment from the medical store cart and must be accompanied by his signaller.

(c) The dispenser must be given the keys of the medical and surgical boxes and operating lamp box.

(d) The steward should have the keys of the other panniers and should unlock them when taken from the cart.

(e) The N.C.O. clerk should have the key of the stationery box in his possession.

1 The table will be low but can be raised by placing medical panniers on top of panniers (C) and (D).